

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Waarts et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,298,187) (hereinafter "Waarts"). These rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that both the present invention, as described in the combination of features of independent claim 1 of the instant application, and the disclosure of Waarts obtain a high output by using a wavelength division multiplex device (the optical fiber coupler) to couple outputs of a plurality of fiber lasers. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention, as described in the combination of features of independent claim 1 of the instant application, differs from the disclosure of Waarts at least with regard to the following points.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention, as described in the combination of features of independent claim 1 of the instant application, includes the following advantageous characteristics. When laser beams are generated inside the respective cores of a plurality of fiber lasers, a large quantity of the laser beams leak from the cores of the respective fiber lasers. A part of the leaked laser beams enters the cores of other fiber lasers disposed in proximity and is coupled with the laser beams generated inside the cores of the other fiber lasers, and injection synchronization is carried out inside the resonators. Then, when a loss is applied to the ports of the fiber lasers except for one fiber laser, a coherently added laser beam is outputted from the other end of the fiber laser that has not been applied with the loss. Applicants respectfully submit that this coherently added output becomes almost equal to a sum of output values of the laser beams if the fiber lasers were to output the laser beams independently.

In other words, Applicants respectfully submit that in order to output the coherently added laser beam from one fiber laser, a fiber laser unit relating to the present invention applies a loss to the ports of other fiber units positively. Concretely, Applicants respectfully submit that in the fiber laser unit, in order to positively increase the bend loss on the ports of the other fiber lasers, the ports of the other fiber lasers are provided with a bend loss portion and the number of times of bending on the ports of the other fiber lasers is increased to forcibly increase the bend loss.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the disclosure of Waarts does not disclose, or even suggest, the application of a loss (at WDM coupler 822) to the ports of the fiber lasers except for one fiber laser among the plurality of fiber lasers in the manner described in the advantageous combination of features of independent claim 1 of the instant application.

Applicants therefore believe, for at least the foregoing reasons, that the subject matter of the present invention claimed in independent claim 1 of the instant application is not anticipated by the disclosure of Waarts. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) should be withdrawn because Waarts does not teach or suggest each feature of independent claim 1 of the instant application. As pointed out in MPEP § 2131, "[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim." Thus, "[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. Of California, 2 USPQ 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)." Furthermore, Applicants respectfully assert that the dependent claims 2 and 3 are allowable at least because of their dependence from independent claim 1 and the reasons set forth above.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573.

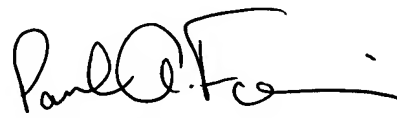
This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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